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Chairman: Mr. Koudelka (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Czech Republic)

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In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Koudelka (Czech Republic), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Abdelaziz** (Egypt) said that a number of recent reports and studies had stressed the need for additional national and international efforts to achieve the three pillars of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental protection — and had reaffirmed the need to assist Africa in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. In the run-up to the World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference to be held in Hong Kong in December 2005, States would be seeking an agreement that ensured the creation of a fair and equitable trade system and reflected common efforts to ensure the success of the global partnership for development. In that regard, he welcomed the commitment made at the Group of Eight (G-8) Summit in Gleneagles to cancel the debt owed by a number of least developed countries and looked forward to reaching a comprehensive agreement that adequately addressed the debt problem of all countries, particularly middle-income countries, where about 75 per cent of the world's poor resided. In that regard, his delegation proposed further examination and implementation of debt swaps for development, concerning which Egypt had conducted a successful experiment.

2. However, the global partnership for development would not bear real fruit unless developed countries fully implemented their commitments. In that context, he welcomed the announcement by a number of countries that they would set timetables for achieving the agreed 0.7 per cent official development assistance (ODA) target and stressed the importance of all developed countries doing the same. His delegation was also interested in further examining additional and innovative sources of financing for development, provided that they did not place any burdens on developing countries and were implemented in a manner consistent with national legislation and development priorities.

3. Noting that the Outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly reflected international interest in Africa and recalling that African leaders too had emphasized the need to address Africa's special needs, he proposed assigning to the Second Committee an item on the special needs of Africa, which would be in addition to the item on the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) allocated to the plenary Assembly.

4. Egypt supported United Nations efforts to establish a worldwide early warning system for natural disasters and looked forward to reaching a common understanding that would promote efforts in the area of climate change without placing new burdens on developing countries, especially as some developed countries had not yet implemented their commitments under the Kyoto Protocol, while others were not yet parties to that Protocol. Egypt called on development partners to honour in full their commitment to help developing countries achieve sustained economic growth and sustainable development, including through the transfer of environmentally sound technologies on a preferential basis.

5. The increase in oil prices made it necessary for developing countries to diversify energy sources and to receive support in their efforts to provide access to energy services to their citizens. In that regard, he called on all relevant regional and international financial institutions to provide finance to energy projects, particularly in middle-income countries. Lastly, greater attention must be given to international migration, which was causing a real brain drain in developing countries. Egypt hoped that discussions in preparation for the high-level dialogue of the General Assembly on international migration and development, to be held in 2006, would be meaningful and would result in a successful outcome.

6. **Mr. Benmellouk** (Morocco) said that, even if the Outcome had not responded to all the concerns of developing countries, the 2005 World Summit had achieved important advances. Many of the commitments would have positive repercussions on the ground if applied immediately. Noting that the Millennium Development Goals now enjoyed universal recognition and support and that all developing countries had made a commitment immediately to implement national development strategies based on investment in human development, he said that the commitment by most developed countries to set a timetable for meeting the 0.7 per cent ODA target was promising. His delegation also welcomed the decision to approve the G-8 proposal to cancel the multilateral

debt of some of the world's poorest countries and encouraged donor countries and international financial institutions to strive to find solutions to the debt problems of other developing countries.

7. His Government was encouraged by the way in which discussions on innovative sources of financing were evolving and welcomed the launch of the International Finance Facility for Immunization (IFFIm) and the pilot project of a tax on airline tickets, which Morocco fully supported. However, while such new approaches could make a significant contribution to international efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, they must not be a substitute for traditional forms of ODA, debt relief or other market access facilities.

8. On the issue of international trade, his delegation regretted that the 2005 World Summit Outcome had not responded to the interests of developing countries or sent a clear message to WTO in that regard. International commitments on ODA and debt relief required a parallel effort on market access if the desired results with respect to poverty and economic growth were to be achieved. It was essential to work towards completing the Doha Round of negotiations and to ensure that account was taken of the specific interests of developing countries. Developed countries had a major responsibility in that respect. It was important to consolidate the commitment made by developed countries and developing countries in a position to do so to provide duty-free and quota-free access to all products originating from least developed countries so as to ensure predictability and enable the countries concerned to direct investment towards the most buoyant export sectors. For its part, Morocco had already undertaken to provide duty-free and quota-free access to exports from the least developed countries in Africa. His delegation also welcomed the agreement to seek a coherent institutional framework with a view to establishing an integrated structure for environmental issues and was ready to work with interested delegations on following up that decision.

9. Noting that international migration and development would be given particular attention in the run-up to the high-level dialogue to be held in 2006 and recalling that Heads of State or Government had agreed at the 2005 World Summit to discuss the multidimensional aspects of international migration and development in order to identify ways and means to maximize their development benefits and minimize their negative impacts, he said that Morocco and developing countries in general were particularly interested in measures to reduce the cost incurred by migrant workers when transferring remittances to their countries of origin. Lastly, the Committee should seriously examine the recommendations contained in the report of the Global Commission on International Migration (GCIM), which was due to be published during the current week.

10. **Mr. Andjaba** (Namibia), speaking on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), said that the SADC region was one of the regions lagging behind in implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. On average, 38 per cent of the population lived on less than $1 a day. Worse still, owing to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the region had one of the highest infant and maternal mortality rates in the world. As a result, life expectancy had fallen dramatically in the early 1990s. The scourge was threatening to reverse all the development gains made over the years and continued to undermine progress by decimating the very foundation of development — human resources. According to the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), one third of people living with HIV lived in SADC countries. Over one million people were estimated to have died from AIDS in the SADC region alone in 2001. SADC countries had responded robustly, developing policy options to deal with HIV/AIDS issues and mitigate the pandemic's adverse effect on agriculture and food security, formulating guidelines on HIV/AIDS and mobile populations, household surveys and a model for mainstreaming orphans and vulnerable children in the education system, and establishing a regional forum for national AIDS authorities. SADC member States had also continued to roll out programmes on antiretroviral therapy and prevention of mother-to-child transmission. HIV/AIDS was the most devastating but not the only challenge facing the region, which also suffered from poverty and income inequality, food insecurity and environmental degradation. The prospects of achieving the Millennium Development Goals in the region would largely depend on how effectively those challenges were addressed.

11. First and foremost, there was an imperative need for more resources for development. An estimated $17.6 billion in external financing was required to halve the number of people living in extreme poverty

and hunger in the SADC region alone. The region continued to suffer a debilitating debt burden: SADC countries had a total debt stock of $78.1 billion with a total annual debt service of $6.8 billion. Indeed, some of them spent more on debt-servicing than on key social sectors. It was lamentable that despite initiatives such as the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, most of the countries of the region were not in a position to service their debt without experiencing shocks. If the trend continued, achievement of the Goals by 2015 would remain out of reach for most SADC countries. The only lasting solution was debt cancellation for HIPC countries and low- and middle-income countries that could not sustain their debt. In that regard, he welcomed the G-8 decision to fully cancel the debt of some HIPC countries. However, steps must be taken to ensure that no HIPC country that had reached completion point should continue to experience severe problems relating to debt sustainability and debt service. Implementation of the G-8 proposals, endorsed by the Development Committee in September 2005, should be expedited.

12. Recalling that the Monterrey Consensus had identified trade as an engine for growth and development, he said that it was in the international community's interests to work collectively to ensure that the Doha Development Round upheld the development dimension and comprehensively addressed issues of interest to developing countries. SADC called on its development partners to summon the political will needed to settle outstanding issues, particularly regarding market access and agricultural subsidies. The August Framework Agreement must be recognized as the most important framework guiding the search for consensus if there was to be a successful outcome to the WTO Ministerial Conference at the end of the year.

13. Noting that ODA was one of the most important sources of development finance, he commended those countries that had met the 0.7 per cent target or set timetables to that end, in particular the European Union. He also welcomed the World Bank's Africa Action Plan ("Meeting the Challenge of Africa's Development: A World Bank Group Action Plan"), which provided a good framework for working together to address the development challenges facing Africa, in accordance with programmes identified by African countries themselves. Without a substantial increase in development resources, the full achievement of the Millennium Development Goals would elude most developing countries. At such a critical juncture, the international community should resist any temptation to reopen or renegotiate past commitments.

14. The SADC Regional Indicative Strategic Development Plan (RISDP) and Strategic Indicative Plan for the Organ on Politics, Defense and Security Cooperation had set a strategic framework for the region's development agenda, with the former providing a blueprint for the next 15 years. SADC had also implemented prudent and sound macroeconomic policies and business-friendly reforms. The region had experienced GDP growth of 4.1 per cent in 2004, compared to 3.2 per cent in 2003. Its goal was to reach the international minimum growth rate of 6 to 7 per cent in order to reduce poverty by half in 2015.

15. The SADC region continued to enjoy peace and stability (critical prerequisites for development), consolidation of democracy and rule of law. At its 2004 Summit, it had adopted the Principles and Guidelines Governing Democratic Elections. A number of member States had held or would soon be holding presidential and parliamentary elections inspired by those principles and guidelines. At its 2005 Summit, a decision had been taken to establish an SADC Electoral Advisory Council to advise SADC structures and the electoral commissions of member States.

16. Realization of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, would largely depend on significant reforms at the national and international levels. At the country level, reforms should concentrate on integrating the Goals into country-owned long-term development strategies, reorienting domestic policies and institutions towards meeting specific Goals, and promoting good governance and partnerships with all stakeholders. Development partners, meanwhile, should honour their commitment to increase and improve ODA to least developed countries and align aid with the needs of recipient countries; open their markets to commodities from SADC countries and build a fair international trading system; broaden debt relief and finance new commitments through grants rather than loans; and increasingly move towards multilateralism. Since it was convinced that development should remain at the centre of the United Nations agenda, SADC would like to see the Committee revitalized and the Economic and Social

Council strengthened in order to enable them to carry out the demanding task of supporting the international community's development efforts.

17. **Mr. Sunaga** (Japan) said that, while developed and developing countries had been making earnest efforts to mobilize financial resources, the international community now needed to take concrete action to implement its commitments. To that end, consideration needed to be given to a number of key issues. First, since the recent rapid increases in oil prices could rapidly undermine the long-standing efforts to mobilize financial resources, it would be appropriate for the Committee to hold in-depth consultations on that subject, with particular reference to the development perspective. Second, concerted action needed to be taken to halt the spread of potentially catastrophic diseases such as avian influenza and severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS), the dangers of which were magnified by the rapid pace of globalization. Developing countries were particularly vulnerable and collective action was required to achieve the internationally agreed development goals. Third, Japan welcomed the decision to establish a Peacebuilding Commission, which would finally enable the United Nations to address the challenge comprehensively, by involving not only the Security Council but also other relevant United Nations bodies. Lastly, his delegation welcomed the fact that the 2005 World Summit Outcome gave due attention to natural disasters, the economic and social impact of which had long been underestimated by the international community. The Asian tsunami of 2004 and Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in the United States had highlighted the need for worldwide, coordinated action. Japan emphasized the importance of taking advantage of such increased awareness and encouraged Member States to contribute actively to deliberations, in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

18. Japan also attached great importance to the notion of human security and to South-South cooperation, both of which were mentioned in the 2005 World Summit Outcome. Japan believed that the two approaches would make a substantial contribution to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and looked forward to fruitful discussions on them. Lastly, Japan was fully committed to implementing the 2005 World Summit Outcome and hoped to see significant results by the end of the current session.

19. **Mr. Baja** (Philippines) said that it should be the priority concern of all Member States to move the development agenda of the United Nations forward. Development was the foundation of peace, security and stability and without it efforts to establish international peace would be jeopardized. It was therefore in the common interest to alleviate poverty and promote sustainable development with a view to achieving the internationally agreed development objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals. However, the Goal of halving poverty by 2015 would only be achieved if the commitments made at various meetings and conferences over the past decade were implemented. To that end, the international community needed to think of creative and innovative ways to complement existing means of cooperation.

20. The debt problem of many middle-income countries had been exacerbated by soaring oil and energy prices, threatening their ability to achieve the internationally agreed development objectives, including the Goals. As a result, the assistance of donor countries and international financial institutions was needed in order for the countries to have adequate resources to finance the development priorities outlined in their national development plans. The Philippines had therefore proposed the voluntary adoption of debt-equity swaps for Millennium Development Goals projects as a creative and innovative means of mobilizing resources to help alleviate poverty and achieve the Goals. Under the proposal, rich countries, multilateral institutions and large commercial banks would plough back into the economies of debtor countries 50 per cent of an agreed portion of the debt-servicing payments, which would then be channelled towards the financing of Goal-based priorities. Projects under the scheme could focus on a variety of areas such as health, education and the environment. The Philippines looked to bilateral donors, creditors and multilateral financial institutions to give serious consideration to its debt relief scheme for middle-income countries.

21. The international community, under the aegis of the United Nations, should bear in mind that unbridled oil prices would adversely affect the ability of developing countries to meet their development commitments. In that respect, it should enhance energy cooperation, support efficient energy use and explore and utilize alternative energy sources, such as wind power or solar energy. The possibility should also be

considered of convening an oil summit to discuss how to address the looming energy crisis efficiently and effectively.

22. Increasing migration required a comprehensive and effective international cooperation mechanism capable of addressing its multidimensional aspects. The Philippines stood ready to cooperate with others in contributing to the development of such a mechanism. There was also a need to look at remittances as an economic resource that could propel and sustain economic growth and development in migrants' countries of origin and at ways of reducing the transaction costs of remittances.

23. **Mr. Chowdhury** (Bangladesh) said that, despite recent encouraging developments and economic growth in some developing economies, the gap between rich and poor was widening, the reverse transfer of resources was continuing, interest rates and inflation were increasing and oil prices were soaring. With a view to achieving the internationally agreed development objectives, including the Millennium Development Goals, his delegation therefore proposed that: the international financial institutions should be democratized, allowing developing countries greater scope for policymaking in formulating their own development strategies; an open, rule-based and equitable trade system should be established and should provide greater access for the products of developing countries; the commitments made on the provision of official development assistance should be implemented, and such assistance should be untied and provided as a direct budgetary support; foreign direct investment to poor or non-recipient countries should be encouraged through incentives; urgent action should be taken to address the worsening debt burden of developing countries, particularly through debt cancellation; labour mobility from developing countries to developed countries should be enhanced through mode 4 of the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS); developed countries should make available to developing countries knowledge, information and technologies, including the formula for producing life-saving pharmaceutical products; and a holistic approach should be adopted to resolve the problems of least developed countries, requiring the full and effective implementation of the Brussels Programme of Action for the least developed countries.

24. **Ms. Laohaphan** (Thailand) said that a global partnership had emerged for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in which various stakeholders were given specific roles and responsibilities. For a development agenda to succeed, it must be crafted, led and owned by the recipient countries. The ultimate responsibility for achieving the Goals rested primarily with developing countries. The latter should commit themselves to putting in place an enabling environment for the achievement of the Goals through the adoption and implementation of policies conducive to pro-poor economic growth, private sector investment and the empowerment of the poor.

25. Closer cooperation for development had become an important mechanism for many countries. The promotion of subregional and regional cooperation provided a development framework in which developing countries could utilize their diverse strengths, fully harness their economic potential and generate balanced development throughout their subregion or region. Regional cooperation provided greater access to resources and markets as well as a forum for sharing common concerns, knowledge and information.

26. Thailand stood ready to cooperate with others in reforming the multilateral trading system and the international financial system with a view to establishing free and fair systems. In that connection, her Government looked forward to contributing to the successful and timely conclusion of the Doha Development Round. The forthcoming Ministerial Conference of WTO in Hong Kong provided another important opportunity for both developed and developing countries to make progress towards placing the proper emphasis on the development dimension. Focus must also be placed on the broader picture, so as to maintain a balanced package for the Doha Development Agenda as a whole. The Second Committee would have to show flexibility, good faith and the ability to compromise in order to achieve the progress desired in the area of international trade, development and financial systems.

27. Sustainable development and environmental issues must be pursued consistently. However, translating that principle into practical national and international strategies was also important and should be undertaken simultaneously. Developed and developing countries had common but differentiated responsibilities, common goals but different tasks. The same principle should be applied to the work of the Second Committee and its resolutions.

28. More attention needed to be given to humanitarian relief assistance and disaster reduction, particularly to making coordination more effective. Thailand had been doing its utmost to put in place an effective region-wide tsunami early warning system. A multidonor voluntary trust fund launched recently with governmental funds would contribute to broadening the tsunami response by developing a network of national and regional centres. The fund would also assist those centres in building capacity in terms of technology, organization and expertise.

29. The scope of the Second Committee's work did not require any expansion. Rather, existing agendas should be put into practice and real progress should be made on work programmes.

30. **Mr. Sen** (India) said that, while the 2005 World Summit Outcome had its shortcomings, what had been achieved by developing countries on economic issues reflected the extent of their solidarity. Resistance to unjust international regimes was bound to grow, and any treaty that impinged adversely on the livelihood of ordinary people could not long endure. The Outcome recognized that the realization of the Millennium Development Goals would require stronger international cooperation for development. However, most delegations had had much higher expectations from the Summit in the area of development, particularly with regard to clear political direction in the areas of finance, trade, technology and debt relief. It was vital for the United Nations to give such direction to the forthcoming WTO Ministerial Conference, since progress in the trade negotiations had been disappointing in a number of areas.

31. His delegation recognized the progress made on the Innovative Financing Framework for Immunization. Operationalizing the latter was particularly important, since frontloading aid would enable many recipient countries to overcome the initial critical bottlenecks in the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals. As proposals for generating additional resources reached maturity, the establishment of robust and efficient mechanisms for tracking actual ODA flows would be vital, especially in the context of the recent debt relief initiative. State sovereignty was an important means of defending citizens' rights. Anything that eroded a State's autonomy in policymaking, such as the Bretton Woods institutions and speculative capital flows, therefore needed to be reformed and checked. In that respect, a kind of Tobin tax was not simply a means of innovative financing but also of strengthening policy autonomy.

32. His delegation welcomed the proposals for intensifying global development partnerships to help Africa. Consolidating economic and social progress in Africa was a challenge for the entire international community. India had an extensive bilateral programme of economic and scientific cooperation with Africa based on grants and credits. It favoured the mobilization, through the United Nations system, of greater resources and coalitions of the willing for such areas as agriculture, water management and public health.

33. He was gratified by the recent initiative on irrevocable debt cancellation for heavily indebted poor countries, recalling that debt burdens were a serious threat to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. It was essential to ensure that commitments made to provide additional resources were implemented without delay. Moreover, debt stock cancellation should be complemented by a sharp increase in ODA, in keeping with the Monterrey Consensus.

34. Environmental protection remained a major challenge for developing countries. One of the major constraints faced by the developing countries in carrying out the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation was the availability of environmentally sound technology. The global regime in place inhibited the use of technology for development by impeding the rights of all to share in the benefits of technological advancement.

35. **Mr. Baali** (Algeria) said that the 2005 World Summit Outcome had diverged considerably from its planned objectives and that discussions on institutional reform and human rights had overshadowed development issues. Development issues should remain a central concern for the international community, however, since international peace and security could not be achieved without development. It was therefore vital to shift the focus back to development issues by promoting and strengthening global partnerships on the basis of shared responsibilities and benefits. Furthermore, international cooperation for development needed to be placed once more on a sound footing and the commitments undertaken by all development partners fulfilled. International cooperation currently remained inadequate, owing

chiefly to the lack of the political will required to translate the commitments into action on the ground.

36. Despite the efforts made by bilateral and multilateral development partners, much remained to be done to achieve the Goals by 2015. To that end, the developed countries should: honour their commitment to provide ODA equivalent to 0.7 per cent of their GNP; take courageous decisions to reduce the heavy debt burden; settle trade issues; make the trading system more open and equitable; and make information and communication technologies more accessible.

37. The considerable efforts made by developing countries to honour their commitments were being undermined by the non-delivery of promised funds and by unjust rules governing international economic relations. Those obstacles to development should remain central concerns requiring swift and equitable solutions.

38. The international community should pay particular attention to the special needs of Africa, with a view to enabling it to pursue sustainable economic growth and integrate into the global economy. To that end, NEPAD could act as a solid platform for a fruitful partnership between Africa and the international community. However, NEPAD would not succeed without the active and consistent support of the international community.

39. Environmental degradation called for urgent collective action. His country had acceded to all the relevant international instruments, including the Kyoto Protocol. The proclamation by the United Nations of 2006 as the International Year of Deserts and Desertification was an opportunity for the international community to promote public awareness of desertification and related phenomena, which were an obstacle to development. In that regard, the international community as a whole should pay greater attention to the implementation of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification. States affected by environmental degradation should have access to any technologies necessary for overcoming problems and pursuing their development.

40. South-South cooperation had taken new steps forward in 2005 as a result of the Second South Summit, held in Doha, at which the countries represented had strengthened their commitment to such cooperation. That progress stemmed from the current determination to strengthen South-South cooperation in all areas and to take into account the contribution of regional and triangular cooperation. Such actions and initiatives should be supported, encouraged and strengthened.

41. **Mr. Badji** (Senegal) said that, in order to address widespread underdevelopment, particularly in Africa, and a potential slowdown in the world economy, bold steps would have to be taken on a number of fronts. Famine, malnutrition and food insecurity affecting millions of Africans must be obliterated, and Africa must be more fully integrated in the world trading system. In that connection, he called for greater trade liberalization and implementation of the Doha Round, including the removal of barriers to ensure greater market access for developing countries' products. He welcomed the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) to increase trade between the United States and Africa and noted that the 2005 AGOA Forum had been held in Dakar in July. He also called for contributions to the Digital Solidarity Fund, established to bridge the digital divide between developing and developed countries by strengthening infrastructure and human capital.

42. His delegation welcomed the decision of the Bretton Woods institutions to cancel the multilateral debt of 18 countries, including Senegal, and hoped it would be implemented immediately without preconditions. It suggested that the same privilege should be extended to other countries. It also welcomed proposals to generate additional financing for development through an international finance facility and the pilot project on global transport taxes, as well as economic growth policies in developing countries based on good governance and the rule of law.

43. Intent on achieving the Millennium Development Goals, Senegal had one of the strongest economies in Africa. Through sound management of public finances, effective policies to control inflation and a healthy macroeconomic framework, it had attained a growth rate of 6.3 per cent in 2005. More than 5,000 jobs for youth had been created annually. The incidence of HIV/AIDS had decreased from 1.7 to 0.7 per cent, and the school enrolment rate had climbed from 50 per cent in 2000 to 70 per cent in 2005. The Senegalese development strategy was based on investment in human resources, expansion of infrastructure (roads, bridges, and a new international airport) and the promotion of private initiative through, inter alia, a

reduction in corporate taxes. Senegal's accelerated growth strategy, designed to increase the annual real growth rate of the gross domestic product to over 7 per cent through the creation of wealth, was bolstered by its graduation from the HIPC Initiative in 2004, its eligibility for the Millennium Challenge Account, and the implementation of reforms under its National Programme of Good Governance.

44. He urged the international community to support NEPAD and the development of agriculture, on which the majority of the African population was dependent, through the transfer of technology, including under Dakar Agricole, a programme founded by Senegalese President Abdoulaye Wade. Another project sponsored jointly by President Wade and President Obasanjo of Nigeria — the construction of a "great green wall" in the Sahara to control desertification in Africa — would benefit both agriculture and the global environment.

45. Eradication of the major pandemics of the century (AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria, poliomyelitis) would also be crucial. In addition, drepanocytosis had become a major public health problem in Africa, and its debilitating effects were an obstacle to development.

46. **Mr. Widhya** (Cambodia) said that, without development assistance, many States, particularly the least developed countries, would fail to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. He urged developed countries to increase ODA to the least developed countries from 0.15 to 0.2 per cent of their GNP. Stressing that trade was one of the most important external sources of financing for development, he reiterated the importance of the role played by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in trade liberalization, the revitalization of financial flows and technology transfer. UNCTAD must be maintained and strengthened in order to facilitate the integration of developing countries and countries in transition in the multilateral trading system. He called for an equitable and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system that would enhance market access for the few exportable products of the least developed countries, and stressed the importance of greater stability in the international financial and monetary systems. The aggravation of economic disparities between the countries of the North and South was extremely disheartening.

47. Poverty eradication continued to present the most formidable development challenge in Cambodia, a least developed country. Poverty reduction efforts in Cambodia were focused on diversification of the light industry sector, the development of tourism, increased agricultural production and job opportunities. Small landowners were learning to deal with external factors by diversifying their economic activities. Human resources development, particularly the promotion of education and health, and debt relief were other vital poverty reduction measures.

48. Through its Rectangular Strategy and its Governance Action Plan, his Government was implementing reforms designed to achieve strong economic growth, higher employment, a more efficient public sector and equity and social justice. Annual economic growth of 6 to 7 per cent, equitable distribution of income, and sustainable environmental management and use of natural resources were key objectives of its national poverty reduction strategy. Cambodia had added clearing mines and unexploded ordnances and assistance to mine victims as a ninth goal beyond the eight Millennium Development Goals.

49. Cambodia had witnessed tremendous economic progress since the introduction of its macroeconomic policy framework in 1993, particularly in the period from 1999 to 2003. It must still find ways to diversify its economy, expand its growth base, curb population growth, build national institutions and strengthen good governance at the central and local levels. Through an integrated and cohesive approach that involved all stakeholders, it hoped to reduce poverty and the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, and to improve human resources development and environmental preservation by 2015.

50. Lastly, he urged the developed countries to assume their share of the responsibility for ensuring the development of the developing countries, particularly through the Doha Plan of Action and efforts to strengthen education and information and communication technology. It also supported the initiative of the Emir of Qatar to host in Doha in 2007 the first follow-up conference to the International Conference on Financing for Development.

51. **Ms. Núñez Mordoche** (Cuba) said that the 2005 World Summit Outcome had been disappointing for the developing world. The Summit, originally proposed by the Group of 77 and China, was supposed to be an

objective appraisal of progress and setbacks in implementing the modest Millennium Development Goals and the other development goals agreed at the major United Nations conferences and summits in the social and economic fields. Instead, it had turned into a summit on reform of the United Nations. Commitments and proposals with regard to financing for development, external debt and international governance had been sorely lacking, and other vital issues, such as trade, had been all but eliminated from the agenda. Previously agreed language on important goals and commitments had been called into question, and some of the new formulations on such issues as HIV/AIDS and gender equality, would actually impede progress. A number of proposals on innovative sources of financing for development had not garnered the desired support, and even the humble "quick-win" initiatives proposed by Professor Sachs were in real danger of being cast aside.

52. Nonetheless, the leaders of poor countries had reminded the world once again of the major problems confronting their peoples — poverty, malnutrition, disease — for which many of them had blamed the existing international economic order and the developed countries' failure to honour their commitments.

53. The Committee should strive to restore the question of development to its rightful prominent place on the United Nations agenda. On the basis of previously concluded agreements, practical actions must be taken to improve the quality of life for the peoples of developing countries. She highlighted the need to achieve progress in genuine cooperation for development, without onerous conditionalities, in full respect for the sovereignty of each nation and its right to choose its development model, and taking into account the interests, priorities and needs of the poorest countries.

54. At the Summit, Cuba had presented its second report on the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, outlining the economic, social and environmental programmes and policies it had undertaken despite a serious drought across much of its territory, an energy shortage owing to high oil prices and, worst of all, the unjust and illegal economic, commercial and financial embargo the United States of America had imposed against it for more than four decades. Nonetheless, Cuba's social indicators were better than those of a number of industrialized countries, testifying to its genuine political will to help those most in need.

55. **Mr. Manongi** (United Republic of Tanzania) urged the Committee to build on the outcomes of the past years' meetings and events, particularly the Millennium Project reports and the 2005 World Summit Outcome (resolution 60/1) with a view to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Recognizing that the primary responsibility for achieving the Goals lay with developing countries themselves, he nonetheless stressed the vital importance of an enabling international environment. Developing countries had taken many initiatives at the national level and through their economic groups and gatherings, such as the Second South Summit, which had adopted the Doha Plan of Action.

56. Noting the slow progress of the Doha Development Round, he expressed the hope that both developed and developing countries would show the flexibility needed to ensure the successful conclusion of the Doha Development Agenda work programme at the Sixth Ministerial Conference of WTO to be held in Hong Kong in December. The importance of the Doha work programme had been highlighted in the Development Committee communiqué issued by the Bretton Woods institutions on 25 September.

57. Agriculture remained the backbone of many developing economies. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), agriculture accounted for approximately 30 to 60 per cent of the GDP of least developed countries and employed 40 to 90 per cent of their populations. Noting that more than 82 per cent of the Tanzanian population depended on agriculture for its livelihood, he appealed to development partners to provide adequate resources to the Second Account of the Common Fund for Agriculture.

58. Owing to a lack of political will, national and international efforts to mobilize adequate financing for development fell far short of what was needed. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the recent commitment by the European Union to establish timetables for achieving the 0.7 per cent target for ODA. Those timetables must be realistic, however, if the Millennium Development Goals were to be attained by 2015.

59. **Mr. Hachani** (Tunisia) said that, while the Outcome of the High-level Plenary Meeting contained

certain positive features, overall it failed to come up to expectations. That said, the event had at least made the Millennium Development Goals the catalyst of a new development dynamic. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the renewed commitment by the World Summit to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for ODA by 2015 at the latest, as well as the decision taken by the World Bank and IMF to cancel the debt of the 18 poorest countries.

60. The challenge of eradicating poverty was currently the subject of a clear global consensus, increasingly mobilizing all the members of the international community. The roots of insecurity were undoubtedly economic. Without genuine prospects of development and a well-coordinated international partnership, the risks of economic and political instability would continue to loom large. There were a few interrelated and interdependent areas where change was needed in order to give an operational perspective to the international consensus on development and to be able to strike a balance between development objectives and globalization constraints.

61. First, ODA was held to be both the precursor and the driving force of any strategy for mobilizing national financial resources. Macroeconomic and structural reforms in the developing countries ran up against financing needs which ODA could help to meet. It was well established that innovative sources of financing were a response to an unsatisfactory level of ODA, not as a substitute for it, but as a necessary complement. The proliferation of development and poverty-eradication initiatives and projects demonstrated that financing had acquired a greater prominence in the international landscape, one example being the Global Solidarity Fund established by the General Assembly. Tunisia warmly welcomed the proposal made by Qatar to host, in the course of 2007, the first follow-up conference to the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey in March 2002.

62. Secondly, the synergistic relationship between trade, development and financing was now an accepted reality. The implementation of the Doha Development Agenda, within the context of the WTO multilateral negotiations, should be of interest to all Member States. But, in fact, trade and commerce, powerful catalysts for economic growth and human development, continued to operate in a multilateral system that was unbalanced, incompatible with the commitments made under the Millennium Declaration and the Monterrey Consensus, and out of line with the Doha Development Agenda. In that regard, his delegation drew attention to the commitment in the 2005 World Summit Outcome to effective and non-discriminatory operation of the multilateral trading system and the implementation of the development dimensions of the Doha work programme.

63. Thirdly, the capacity of the developing countries to handle debt and integrate debt sustainability into development strategies required strengthening. Prospects for growth, human development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals depended on a manageable level of debt. The middle-income countries also faced problems of development, poverty and debt sustainability and still needed the support of the international community, which should be tailored to the specific needs of each country. For the middle-income countries, the recycling of debts for investment in social and environmental projects would stimulate development and reduce poverty. The international community could surely identify additional debt relief mechanisms that would not compromise the stability of the international financial institutions or jeopardize the financial credibility of the countries concerned.

64. Fourthly, Tunisia — given its geographical position close to the south of Europe and the number of its natives who had emigrated — attached major importance to the issue of migration and development, which should be the theme of an international conference. Tunisia had entered into agreements on organized migration with various countries of the region, an initiative that the International Organization for Migration held up as a model. Remittances by emigrants were little utilized as a source of development financing because they were depleted by high transfer costs. An international arrangement to reduce such costs should be worked out in the interest of creating additional financing for development.

65. Lastly, the digital divide was symptomatic of a world characterized by opposing economic, social, political and cultural forces. The development of information and communication technologies had not benefited all countries equally and was perpetuating the divide between regions, social classes and individuals. In that respect, Tunisia welcomed the commitment by the World Summit in September 2005 to ensure the success of the Tunis phase of the World

Summit on the Information Society in November 2005. High-level participation by all Member States in an event with the potential to establish a balanced and inclusive information society would make that commitment a reality.

66. **Ms. Bahemuka** (Kenya) said that in the light of the 2005 World Summit's call for robust global partnerships between North and South, as a prerequisite for success, Millennium Development Goal 8 had acquired an even greater significance. Her Government appreciated the recent commitments by the G-8 countries to increase ODA to Africa and welcomed the establishment of timetables by many developed countries for attainment of the target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for ODA not later than 2015 and for reaching at least 0.5 per cent by 2010.

67. The flow of direct foreign investment had been uneven, with Africa greatly disadvantaged. Sustained efforts were required to assist developing countries in creating the necessary enabling environment for foreign direct investment, especially in the infrastructure and capacity-building sectors.

68. Her Government welcomed the pledge by the G-8 countries to cancel 100 per cent of the outstanding debt of 18 HIPC countries. The pledge, when implemented, would undoubtedly unlock resources that were critical for achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Kenya therefore supported calls for total debt cancellation for both HIPC and non-HIPC poor countries.

69. As trade could lead to greater human development and contribute to poverty eradication, her Government welcomed the progress made in the ongoing trade negotiations under the Doha Round. It called for reduction of tariff escalation for products of interest to developing countries, as well as elimination of domestic support measures in the developed countries. However, successful completion of the Doha Round might not mean much unless the international community was willing to put in place the necessary measures to address supply capacity and competitiveness issues in developing countries.

70. South-South cooperation was important for achieving development and must be strengthened in order to meet the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals and targets. Unfortunately, its potential remained largely untapped owing to lack of effective implementation and follow-up mechanisms. Despite those constraints, profound economic and political changes in the South had provided greater opportunities for increasing cooperation. Trends in capital and trade flow had shown a remarkable increase. In particular, South-South cooperation was gradually evolving from a bilateral process to a regional and intraregional one, as in the case of NEPAD and the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership.

71. Sound environmental management was a basis for sustainable economic development. Kenya was committed to the implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcome of the World Summit on Sustainable Development. To that end, various legislative reforms had been undertaken and a framework law on environmental management enacted. There had been proposals in the past for establishment of a United Nations environmental organization, but Kenya felt that the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) was already fulfilling a number of useful roles in promoting international developmental governance, although its work was severely hampered by inadequate financial support. Strengthening and empowering UNEP in its current form would go a long way towards ensuring optimum use of existing infrastructure.

72. The United Nations development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals, could not be achieved without peace and security. The effect of insecurity on Kenya, caused by internal conflicts in both Somalia and the Sudan in the past two decades, had been enormous, and the proliferation of small arms had led to increased crime and the deaths of innocent civilians. The sharp increase in the numbers of refugees coming into the country had overstretched and diverted limited resources, which could otherwise have been used in poverty reduction initiatives, in particular improvements in health and education standards. Consequently, Kenya had been active in both the Sudanese and the Somali peace initiatives, under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Her Government supported the initiatives by the United Nations to implement a 10-year plan for building a peacekeeping capacity within the African Union. It endorsed a holistic definition of collective security which strongly affirmed the connection between peace, development, human rights and the rule of law and called for a comprehensive approach.

73. **Ms. Chenoweth** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)) said that FAO welcomed the reference in the World Summit Outcome to the need to place importance on the development of the rural and agriculture sectors in order to attain the Millennium Development Goals and other development goals. The critical role of agriculture, forestry and fisheries had been understated for too long, and promoting increased investment in those sectors had been a major thrust of the organization's advocacy over the past decade. In order to achieve a strong and lasting impact on poverty, it was necessary to understand how income, hunger reduction, education, health, gender and the environment interacted. In the light of the recent rededication of the international community to the eradication of hunger and poverty, FAO would continue to draw attention to issues and situations with the potential adversely to impact endeavours to attain the development goals. In the course of the present session, FAO would provide Member States with information about the International Year of Rice and the continued importance that FAO would be placing on rice production and its role in providing food security. The International Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, to be held in Brazil in 2006, would be another opportunity to highlight the important role of agriculture and rural development, which would assist in mobilizing the support of national Governments and the international community for ongoing agrarian reform and in securing tenure rights and access to land and other natural resources for the poor.

74. Education was one of the most effective means of alleviating poverty and promoting sustainable development, as it helped to strengthen the capacity of people to solve their own problems and improve their own lives. FAO would continue to promote the importance of education in all areas of its work, in particular in the context of the Education for Rural People initiative being carried out jointly with UNESCO. Another important aspect of its work was the area of gender and development. Improving women's access to resources and services ultimately increased farm productivity and provided a more efficient use of resources, but promoting development that was economically efficient, environmentally friendly and equitable required a complete reorientation of development efforts to enhance women's capacities.

75. It was critical to stress the importance of the development dimension of HIV/AIDS, which should not be viewed solely as a health problem. The epidemic had moved rapidly from urban to rural areas, hitting those who were least equipped to deal with its consequences.

76. FAO would continue to treat as a priority the particular needs of special groups of countries, such as small island developing States, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. She drew attention to the special conference of Ministers of Agriculture of small island developing States, to be convened in November 2005 during the thirty-third session of the FAO Conference, at which Ministers would examine vulnerability issues affecting the food security and sustainable development of their countries. With respect to South-South cooperation, she was pleased to report that, under the FAO Special Programme for Food Security, there were currently more than 100 cooperating countries, approximately 30 of which were operating or developing comprehensive national food security programmes. A crucial aspect of the work of FAO would be its continued support to the secretariat of NEPAD, particularly as it related to the implementation of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) and the companion document on the forestry, fisheries and livestock sectors.

77. In closing, she drew attention to the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the founding of FAO, as well as the twenty-fifth observance of World Food Day, for which the 2005 theme was "Agriculture and Intercultural Dialogue", chosen to highlight the historical contribution of all civilizations to food production.

78. **Ms. Hughes** (United States of America), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, asserted that the United States trade embargo against Cuba was a bilateral issue that should not have come before the General Assembly. In drawing attention to the issue, Cuba was simply attempting to blame the communist regime's failed economic policies on the United States of America and to divert attention from its own human rights record. It had to be remembered that the United States was the largest single source of humanitarian assistance to Cuba. If Cubans were jobless or hungry, it was because of the failings of the current Government, which had shown no interest whatsoever in implementing any economic or political reform that

would lead to democratic change and a free market economy. The Cuban Government was not a victim, as it contended; rather, it was a tyrant, aggressively punishing anyone who dared to have a differing opinion. Castro had steadfastly refused to allow any kind of political opening, continuing to deny Cubans the human rights and fundamental freedoms set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

79. **Ms. Navarro-Barro** (Cuba) said that for thirteen consecutive years the United Nations General Assembly had approved resolutions entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". In 2004, for example, the resolution had obtained the support of the vast majority of the States Members of the Organization: a total of 179 votes. That was the most evident demonstration of the energetic rejection by the international community of the unjust and criminal policy of the Government of the United States of America against Cuba. The clumsy pretexts that that Government used to maintain its policy, which was in stark defiance of international law and had severe extraterritorial implications, were well known. It was a falsehood to claim, as the delegation of the United States of America did, that the embargo was simply a bilateral matter. Rather than a simple embargo, what was being pursued was an economic war against Cuba, of global and colossal dimensions. There was no need to list the innumerable and undeniable achievements of the Cuban revolution in the area of human rights. Accusations like those just made were not surprising coming from a Government which in the immediate past had ignored the most elementary human rights of its population in the South, devastated by Hurricane Katrina. Since the United States delegation appeared to be unaware of Cuba's achievements in matters of economic and social development, she recommended that it should attentively read the report submitted by Cuba on its fulfilment of the Millennium Development Goals.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.